

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated September 20, 2001, the Examiner noted the use of "and/or" in the claims as originally filed. In order to better conform the claims to the requirements of United States patent practice, original claims 1-10 have been canceled in favor of claims 11-21 submitted herein. In each of independent claims 11 and 19, it is stated that the plurality of modules includes a plurality of speech recognition modules and a plurality of speech output modules. A selection is then made of at least one of these modules in the plurality of modules. This means that, from among the plurality of modules, the "at least one of said modules" can be one speech recognition modules, or multiple speech recognition modules, or one speech output module, or multiple speech output modules, or one speech recognition module and one speech output module, or multiple speech recognition modules and multiple speech output modules. Any of these combination is encompassed by the phrase "at least one of said modules." The selection takes place based on the type of module which is needed in order to process an input signal. Once the selection of "at least one of said modules" is made, then the input signal is processed only by the selected "at least one of said modules," and the other modules in the plurality of modules are not used for processing the input signal.

Original claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Hsu et al. The Examiner stated that the Hsu et al reference teaches a speech processing system having a plurality of speech recognition modules, which the Examiner characterized as sub-blocks 41 and 43 in Figure 2, and a plurality of speech output modules, which the Examiner characterized as sub-blocks 53 and 57 in Figure 2. The Examiner stated these components are respectively constructed for a particular

type of speech recognition or speech output (such as isolated speech recognition (ISR) and continuous speech recognition (SCR). The Examiner stated that Hsu teaches a selector for selecting a particular speech recognition module based on the input signal. The Examiner generally referenced Figure 3 of the Hsu et al reference as support for the presence of such a teaching therein.

The conclusion of the Examiner that Hsu teaches a selector comparable to the selector employed in the method and apparatus of the present application is respectfully traversed. As described at column 3, lines 46-55 and as shown in Figure 2 of the Hsu reference, an incoming speech signal is *always* subjected to both an ISR analysis and a CSR analysis. The only selection which takes place is whether the ISR and CSR analysis should take place in parallel or sequentially. It is not possible for an incoming speech signal to be analyzed in the Hsu et al reference only by means of an ISR analysis or only by means of a CSR analysis. Therefore, the selector in the Hsu et al reference does not route an incoming signal to a processing module such that the incoming signal is then processed only in the selected module. The Hsu et al reference therefore does not disclose or suggest controlled selection of a speech recognition type dependent on a type identified in the input signal, as disclosed and claimed in the present application. Both speech recognition types are always implemented in common in the Hsu et al, either in parallel or sequentially. Figure 3 of the Hsu et al reference on which the Examiner relied refers only to a training method for the speech recognition system in Hsu et al, and not for the actual speech recognition itself during operation of the system.

Moreover, the Hsu et al reference does not provide any speech output modules at all. In view of the Examiner's interpretation of the phrase "and/or" used in original

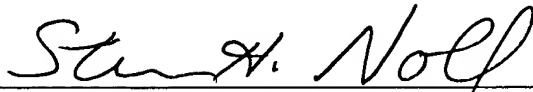
claims 1-10, the Examiner may have been justified in relying on a reference which showed only one of the two "and/or" alternatives, namely a reference disclosing only speech recognition modules. In view of the rewriting of the claims, however, the plurality of modules now must include both speech recognition modules and speech output modules, although, in view of the above explanation, it is possible that the selector, under certain circumstances, may select only one or more speech recognition modules for processing the input signal, or may select only one or more speech output modules for processing the input signal. Nevertheless, both types of modules are available for selection even though, under certain circumstances, only one category of such modules may be selected for use.

The Hsu et al reference therefore does not disclose all of the elements of claims 11-21 as arranged and operating in those claims, and therefore does not constitute an anticipation of any of those claims.

Other references were generally cited but were not specifically relied upon as a basis for rejecting any of the original claims. Therefore, Applicants do not view a detailed distinguishing of the subject matter of claims 11-21 over the teachings of those generally cited references as being necessary at this time. Applicants submit, however, that all claims of the application are patentable over the teachings of all of the references of record, taken singly or in combination.

Early reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Submitted by,



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